

ADDRESSES OF REV. L. BACON, D.D., REV. KIRK
AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE

THE CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE

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The Christian Alliance

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ADDRESSES

OF

REV. L. BACON, D.D., AND REV. E. N. KIRK,

AT THE

ANNUAL MEETING

OF

THE CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE,

HELD IN NEW YORK, MAY 8, 1845,

WITH THE

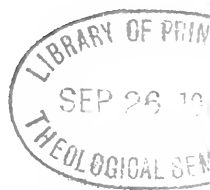
Address of the Society and the Bull of the Pope against it.



NEW YORK:

S. W. BENEDICT, 16 SPRUCE STREET.

—
1845.



THE CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE.

CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I.—This Society shall be called THE CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE.

ARTICLE II.—The objects of the Society shall be to promote religious freedom, and to diffuse useful and religious knowledge among the natives of Italy, and other papal countries.

ARTICLE III.—Any person may become a member of this Society by subscribing the Constitution, and contributing not less than one dollar annually to its funds; and a member for life, by the payment of thirty dollars at one time.

ARTICLE IV.—A Board of twenty-four Councillors, to continue in office till superseded by a new election, and eighteen of whom shall reside in the city of New York and its vicinity, shall be appointed to conduct the business of the Society; one third of the whole number shall go out of office at the expiration of each year, but shall be re-eligible. The Councillors shall have power to appoint all the officers of the Society, who shall hold office during the pleasure of the Board, and also such individuals as from time to time they may deem proper, honorary and corresponding members of the Board; they may also fill such vacancies as may occur in their own number, and fix the time and place of their meetings.

ARTICLE V.—The Society shall hold an Annual Meeting in the month of May (the day and place to be fixed by the Board of Councillors), at which time the Councillors shall be chosen, the accounts presented, and the proceedings of the Board during the current year reported.

ARTICLE VI.—The President, Vice-Presidents, Treasurer and Secretaries for the time being, shall be, ex-officio, members of the Board of Councillors.

ARTICLE VII.—The President, or in his absence, the Vice-President first on the list then present, or in the absence of all the Vice-Presidents, such member as may be chosen for that purpose, shall preside at the meetings of the Society and Board of Councillors. All meetings to be opened with prayer.

ARTICLE VIII.—The Board of Councillors shall meet *statedly*, as often as they shall deem it necessary ; and the President may, at the written request of five members, call *special meetings* of the Board of Councillors, causing at least three days' notice of such meetings to be given. Five members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

ARTICLE IX.—The Board of Councillors shall annually elect, by ballot, a Committee of Publication, consisting of not less than three, nor more than five members, no two of whom shall belong to the same religious denomination ; and no books or tracts shall be published or circulated by the Society, to which any member of that Committee shall object.

ARTICLE X.—Auxiliary Societies may be recognized by this Society, on signifying their approbation of the Constitution and paying their surplus funds into the Treasury. The Presidents of such Societies shall be, ex-officio, Vice-Presidents of the parent institution.

ARTICLE XI.—The Councillors shall have the power of appointing such persons as have rendered essential services to the Society Members for Life.

ARTICLE XII.—The minutes of every meeting shall be signed by the Chairman.

ARTICLE XIII.—This Constitution shall not be altered except at the suggestion of the Board of Councillors, at an annual meeting, and by a vote of two-thirds of the members present.

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ANNUAL MEETING.

THE Annual Meeting of the CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE was held in the First Baptist Church, Broome-st., New York, on Thursday evening, May 8th, 1845. REV. LYMAN BEECHER, D. D., President of the Society, took the Chair. The exercises of the evening were commenced by the reading of the Scriptures, by Rev. S. H. CONE, D. D., followed by prayer by Rev. M. S. HUTTON, D. D.

The Annual Report, prepared by Rev. E. HOLT, Cor. Sec., was then read, and is as follows :

R E P O R T .

It is not our privilege to report, as yet, very extensive results, for the simple reason that we have been thus far rather in a forming state.

The experience of the past year has tested, and, we think, amply proved the practicability of a design like ours—that of enlisting the sympathies, the prayers and the contributions of the various denominations of Protestants, in plans which have for their object the defence of our common interests, and the spiritual welfare of Papal countries.

As yet our organization has not been sufficiently known to secure the resources we need for the execution of our plans. The translation of Merle D'Aubigné's History of the Reformation in Europe into Italian has been commenced, and as soon as the requisite funds shall have been obtained, it will be completed, and the whole work printed. Our ulterior plans will be carried into execution as far and as fast as the circumstances will permit. We are in no breathless haste to bring our designs to their issue. While we wait to swell our ranks by accessions from the various sects, who do not acknowledge the supremacy of Rome, while we thus gather an increased momentum, we do not feel that we are losing time.

Had we needed confirmation of the importance and feasibility of our design, we should have found it in the notice which our Association has received at Rome. We have evidence, from several distinct sources, that the Christian Alliance has excited unusual attention, and called forth serious dread among the leaders of the Romish Church. They are not slow to discern that an association like ours, which combines the scattered ranks of Protestant Christians into one firm phalanx, presents a formidable barrier to the schemes of Papal aggression, and that the forces thus marshalled may overthrow the strongholds of their own usurped jurisdiction. The Pope has devoted to the Christian Alliance no small space in his Encyclical Letter, issued May 8th, 1844. "All primates, patriarchs, bishops, and archbishops," are warned against our proceedings. The bull has been pasted up in the churches of Italy. It has been sent to all parts of the world. We presume that the Papal See would scarcely give such signs of alarm, if it looked upon our design as a weak and pitiful scheme.

We have received from other and better sources encouragement of a different kind. Eminent Christians, of various sects, have warmly applauded our plans. We may mention, particularly, among those by whose approbation and sympathy we have been honored, an English baronet, whose name stands conspicuous among the friends of Christian enterprise, Sir Culling Eardley Smith. The fulminations of the Pope drew his attention to our society. After having written to a gentleman in this city to obtain more specific information, he sent the following letter, with a donation of £10 :—

Torquay, Devonshire, 2d December, 1844.

Gentlemen,—I owe to the kindness of my friend, Dr. Patton, of New York, the receipt of your Address, &c. ; and of further particulars relative to the operations of the Christian Alliance. I thank God, from my heart, for the formation of your society. You have raised a noble standard of alliance between all those who hold the truth of the Bible, against the arch-heresy of Antichrist. Your methods are as politic, as your end is scriptural.

May the great Head of the Church permit you to reap an abun-

dant harvest from the seed sown ! May you live to see the walls of Babylon fall at the sound of the Gospel trumpet ! Already there are symptoms of the approaching crisis ! The Lord hasten it !

I have requested my friend, Dr. Patton, to place in your hands £10, as my contribution to your funds. Having lately translated the Pope's Letter, in which reference is made to your Society, I have ventured to enclose a copy.* I shall do my utmost to urge our friends in Great Britain to give their cordial co-operation to your movement.

Believe me, dear sirs, in the double bond of a common race and a common Saviour, your faithful friend and servant,

C. EARDLEY SMITH.

Such interest in our plans, we trust, will be elicited from many more on both sides of the Atlantic. There are slumbering elements of vast power in the bosom of the Protestant Churches. We have an increasing conviction, that if those elements are combined and directed under the influence of Christian light and love, they will not fail to win the deluded votaries of Romanism to the adoption of a pure Christianity, and to relieve the world of the incubus of Papal despotism.

Rev. EDMUND S. JANES, D. D., Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, moved the adoption of the Report, and in a few appropriate remarks commended the Alliance to the prayers and sympathies of the Christian public.

Rev. Dr. BACON, of New Haven, seconded the motion, and remarked substantially as follows :

It gives me much pleasure, Mr. President, to find myself this evening, what I never expected to be, the successor of a bishop. You may take that, if you please, as a proof that our Society is in deed as well as in name a Christian Alliance ; and let us hope that we may yet see the time when a Methodist bishop shall lay on hands in the seven hilled city, and when Methodist preachers, dividing the patrimony of St. Peter into circuits, and treading the ancient pavements of the Appian Way, shall "preach the Gospel to them that are in Rome also."

* See Appendix.

'This age, Mr. President, as we often hear, and as we all see and feel continually, is an age of revolution—more so perhaps than any preceding age in the history of man. There is often an illusion on our minds when we look at the progress of revolutions in former ages. Events viewed at a distance from the time of their occurrence, seem to lie near together, though separated by more than one lifetime. Such is the law of perspective in time no less than in space; while events which have come to pass at different periods of our own short lifetime, seem to us to be far apart. But what changes have occurred, Mr. President, within your lifetime? Nay, my years have not been *much* more than half as many as yours, and what have I seen? Revolution upon revolution, with portentous rapidity of succession—revolution in everything—empire, commerce, arts, literature, science, all changing as if the wheels of time were rushing on with new rapidity, glowing and smoking on the axle as they approach their final goal.

The progress of revolution in this age is eminently the progress of new opinions struggling for ascendancy. Revolutions in the form of conspiracy, insurrection, war—revolutions which are merely the work of violence, and in which power only passes from one hand to another, or from one family to another, or from one metropolis or kingdom to another—such revolutions as fill the history of Asiatic empires—are of little moment in the history of the world. A revolution in empire acquires importance, and tells in history only as it marks the progress of a new idea achieving its ascendancy over the minds of nations, and moulding their policy and institutions into conformity with itself. The revolutionary convulsions of the present age, as all men know, are little else than the upheaving of the nations by the power of new ideas everywhere spreading, and everywhere taking possession of the minds of awakening thousands. And conflict will succeed to conflict, one explosion after another will shake the nations, till these ideas are either completely suppressed or completely triumphant. Nay, they can never be suppressed. There is no barrier of throne or altar, no array of armies, no bastion or bulwark, that can always stand before them.

It is manifest, I think, to every reflecting mind, that the next great stage in the progress of opinion among the nations of Christendom, must be the assertion and reception of the doctrine of religious freedom. Freedom is the great passion of this age ; the thirsting and yearning of the nations is for freedom. They are struggling for it, living for it, and ready to rush into any avenue that will lead to it. The nations groan being burthened. But the history of the last three hundred years—nay, the history of all ages shows that the liberty sought for, personal liberty, civil liberty, liberty of thought, liberty of the press, every kind of liberty, will be insecure, will be unreal, unless guarded, and upheld, and made to live by the vital energy of religious freedom. As yet, the assertion of liberty, the demand for it, the desire for it, especially in Roman Catholic countries, has never pointed to religious freedom as the first thing and the great thing. Hence in all Roman Catholic countries, and chiefly in those which have no Protestant element, all attempts at civil liberty are abortive, and must be. Man is made for religion—for the knowledge and the intelligent and willing service of God. Take away his moral and religious nature—divest him of his relations to God and to eternity—and he is not man. Give him whatever other freedom you will, if you do not give him freedom for the knowledge and the intelligent service of God, if you hold the highest and noblest part of his nature still in bondage, he does not yet begin to be a freeman.

One of the signs of the times, throughout the world, is an increase of the spirit of religious inquiry, and a development of religious sensibility. Infidelity such as that of Voltaire and Paine—infidelity with the name and form of infidelity—is felt to be less and less in keeping with the tendencies of thought and sentiment. Infidelity itself just now—if it would not be altogether contemptible—is constrained to be liberal towards Christianity, and to protest against that philosophy which disposes of eternity and of the mysteries of man's nature and existence with a sneer. It pays homage to the religious element in man ; it speaks respectfully of Christ ; it uses many a devout expression ; it is

sometimes almost persuaded to be a Christian, or at least it tries to make men think so. Meanwhile a new and more active vitality is manifesting itself in all the so called forms and systems of Christianity. Men are waking up in all quarters to feel that they sustain relations, not to the visible only and the transient, but to eternity and to the eternal God. Seriousness—earnestness about religious things—is getting to be the character of the times. We mark a striking difference in this respect between the present portion of our age, and the period through which we were passing a few years ago. Religious questions are exciting a wider and profounder interest here, and in Great Britain, and throughout Europe. Thus it is becoming daily more and more probable that the next stage in the progress of opinion throughout Europe, and throughout the world, will be the assertion, and the slow but sure reception, of the great idea of religious freedom.

And when that idea shall have become—as in time it must become—self-evident to all men—when it shall be enthroned in the minds of the nations, and perpetually predominant in their life and being—then it will take possession of the governments of the nations, and work itself deep into their constitutions and their laws. When that idea shall be in other lands as completely and universally self-evident as it is in this land; then in other lands, as here, the government and the laws will be compelled, by an inexorable tendency of nature, to adjust themselves to that idea. And what changes will the ascendancy of that one idea involve? It is the want of freedom, and first of all the want of religious freedom in Roman Catholic countries, which creates the great and obvious fact that they are continually disgorging their superabundant misery upon Protestant countries. At this hour, one chief danger of Protestantism, in a political point of view, arises, strangely enough, from the fact that Protestant countries under the influence of the freedom, and especially of the religious freedom which they enjoy in various degrees, are so fair and happy that they seem like Elysian fields to those who dwell in the Tartarus of spiritual despotism. Thus it is that emigration sets with so strong a current from Catholic to Protestant countries. Eng-

land has misery enough of her own ; but the misery of her own peasantry is aggravated continually by the pouring in upon her green shores, of superabundant misery from that yet greener isle, which she has cursed with a despotism she would not endure at home. So we, who are here to-night, well know that our country has at this hour no greater danger than that which presses in upon us from the Roman Catholic countries of the old world. This is a danger which we cannot think of averting ; we must meet it. The mighty tide of immigration cannot be turned backward ; nor would I ask to have it stayed ; let us but do our part, trusting in God, and the God of our fathers will bear us safely through. A similar danger exists in Switzerland. Geneva itself, the cradle of the Reformation, is in danger of being overwhelmed by Roman Catholic immigration. Religious freedom, with its quickening influences upon the minds of a people, raises that people in the scale of being, gives them new impulses to enterprise, new industry and skill for labor, till the country they inhabit brightens and blooms into new beauty, and the soil beneath their feet becomes like Eden.

Nor is this altogether a mystery. For what is religious freedom ? What is that doctrine, the assertion and universal reception of which, among a people, works such changes ? What is it ? It is simply the development and application of that great principle which lies at the foundation of the Gospel—the principle of the right, nay, let me rather say the duty, of private judgment. This is Protestantism—this is Christianity. There can be no Christianity without it. There is no Christianity but the recognition of the Gospel as a revelation—aye, a *revelation*, from GOD to MAN, a revelation which every individual man to whom it comes, must receive, and believe, and obey, under his individual responsibility to God, in the exercise of his own faculties. The Gospel bids men *repent*, under its call, and in view of the great truths from eternity which it presents as motives to repentance. It bids men *believe* what it reveals. It bids them *obey* what it enjoins ; and the obedience it requires is not mechanical and formal, but the obedience of the intelligent and spiritual nature.

Thus it bids men think, reflect, discriminate; and that not by proxy, but in person. Thus it calls men to the exercise of their minds, and makes them partakers of a spiritual freedom. Every religion, which is not essentially a religion of unthinking and unmeaning performances, must rest upon the assumption of the sacred right, the high and awful duty, of private judgment. The *duty* of thought and reflection about God and the soul, and the soul's relations to eternity—the duty of inquiring what God reveals, and of believing and obeying all his revelations—is the *right* to think, to inquire after truth, and to receive the truth as it manifests itself to the soul; and this right, recognized and honored as a right, is religious freedom. Take that first element of Christianity, “He that believeth shall be saved,” and you find that it involves the idea of the duty, and therefore of the right, of every man to know God, to see him with the eye of faith, to apprehend his character and glory, to confide in his promises, to understand his truth, and to obey his will with intelligent and affectionate homage. This idea, developed and applied, is religious freedom.

Now it is the assertion of this idea, thus unfolded and applied, to which we, as a society, are pledged. It is this particular aspect and bearing of the enterprise of converting the world, which is represented by the Christian Alliance. And it is well that among the assemblies which are gathered from day to day on such an occasion as this, there is one which stands out distinct and eminent as the embodiment of the great Protestant, nay, the great Christian truth, of the right and the duty of every man to think, to feel, to judge, to worship, for himself, under his responsibility to God. It is right, it is seemly, it is beautiful, to find in this assemblage of Christian anniversaries, one that holds up distinctly the one idea of universal religious freedom. We need to bring home to our hearts and minds, amid all these developments of zeal—amid these various appeals, rousing us to the conflict with error and superstition, and with all the devices and tactics of the powers of darkness—the duty of honoring religious freedom. Under these multiplied and stirring excitements, we need that lesson, which the distinct remembrance of the great principle of religious freedom is fitted to teach us.

But how can the Christian Alliance act for the promotion of religious freedom? This is a fair question; and if we cannot answer it satisfactorily, we cannot expect coöperation. Of course we cannot at this hour go into all the details which such an answer may involve; but I may say enough, in a few words, to show that our enterprise is not chimerical.

Let me say then plainly, at the outset, We have nothing to do with any organization or movement for political ends. We have nothing to do with any revolution in which physical force is to be used as an instrument. We have nothing to do with any schemes of violence or of insurrection against tyranny. We have nothing to do with plots and conspiracies and secret operations of any kind whatever. We have no capacity for doing anything of that sort if we would. All that is out of our vocation. There are other men of a different name, and of a very different standing and reputation—Europe knows them well, and America is likely to know them too—who deal in conspiracies, and secret arrangements, and underground machinations. But all that policy is incongruous with the genius and structure of Protestantism. Protestants can do nothing in that way if they try. It is counted by some the misfortune of Protestantism, but I count it the felicity of Protestantism, that it is so disorganized, so uncentralized, so unsubmissive to authority, so popular in its structure, as to be incapable of acting by any secret machinery. Our friends here to-night, who may intend to transmit some account of our proceedings to the Court of Rome, may take note of this, and set it in their tablets distinctly, that we admit fully our incapacity—nay, we glory in our incapacity of acting by those means, by which Popery achieves its triumphs.

We are to act, then, openly, and in the face of the world. Nay, the very thing that we desire, as most auspicious to success, is to have the world look on and see what we are doing. We act, and we design to act, only by suggestion and discussion, by the diffusion of ideas—nay, of one idea chiefly, and of others only as they are related to this, or follow in its train. We insist that it is the right of every man, upon God's footstool,

to read God's book. We insist that, as God now commands all men everywhere to repent, it is the privilege and duty of all men everywhere to know, by the exercise of their own minds, with whatever aids and advantages He gives them, those vast and stupendous motives by which he enforces his command. This is our position. This one idea we are to inculcate. We would array and embody in behalf of it the moral force of all the free and believing minds, not of our own country only, nor of Protestant Europe only, but of Christendom. We believe that in Roman Catholic countries—we believe that in Italy, and even at Rome, there are minds, not skeptical and careless, but earnest and believing minds, ready to receive this great truth, ready to adhere to it, ready to aid in diffusing it. If the press is not free *in* Italy, the Italian press is free *out* of Italy. If speech is not free *in* Italy, the Italian language *out* of Italy may give its music to the utterance of one great and high idea, the doctrine of religious freedom.

This, then, is what we wish to do in Europe, and particularly with reference to Italy. We wish to do it now, in this accepted and propitious time—now, in the lull, as it were, of the long tempest of revolution—now, ere the clouds which ever and anon begin to gather in the horizon, and then disappear, shall condense into blackness, and sweep over Europe in storms of military violence. I wish to leave this impression distinctly, that the time now passing, is the time for scattering the seeds of thought, of opinion, of intellectual and spiritual life; where they may vegetate silently, and spring up and grow, till in the end they shall produce a harvest that shall “shake like Lebanon.” Few of us, I apprehend, are sufficiently aware of the precarious tenure on which the peace of Europe is suspended, or of the precariousness of the entire order of things now existing there. We talk of those thrones as ancient. You can remember, Mr. President, when hardly one of them was standing; when the thrones on which the monarchs of Southern and Romish Europe especially now sit—that of the Pontiff among the rest—were overturned and swept away. They have been patched and set up again, mostly within

my memory; and the occupants just now seem to sit on their "ancient thrones," as the language of the day is, with something of the aspect of tranquillity; yet men who know about these old thrones that have been so lately capsized and righted again, know full well, that there is not one of them which does not tremble at its base with every breath. That old throne of the Pontiff, how firmly does that stand? How much of the feeling of security is there in the bosom of him who sits to-day in the chair of Hildebrand? He sits there; his throne stands on its base—only as by the permission of heretical England; and that he knows and feels. Let me point to an illustration of this, which has just taken place, as it were, before our eyes. We have seen a great political agitation in Ireland, and have seen it suddenly, miraculously subsiding. How is this? The great Agitator, the great Liberator of Ireland—is he dismayed, wearied, baffled, defeated? No—the Pope, just as Ireland seemed certain of gaining for itself a Roman Catholic parliament, and a substantive existence as a Roman Catholic kingdom, *the Pope* has interposed with his veto. What is the matter with the Pope? The British Government, it is presumed, has intimated to His Holiness, very indirectly no doubt, and with the most delicate and roundabout hint imaginable, yet distinctly enough to be understood, that it would be quite acceptable to Sir Robert Peel, if His Holiness would send a letter to the bishops and archbishops of his Church in Ireland, commanding them to keep the peace; and furthermore, that if he would not send such a letter, it would not be strange if agitation should show itself on the banks of the Tiber. A word from the British cabinet to Austria, saying to the Austrian government, "Maintain your existing order of things, as you please, on your own side of the Po, but pass not that river with your bayonets," and in a week the government of the Pope, in the city of the Cæsars, would be at an end. And the Pope knows it; and therefore the slightest and remotest hint from the cabinet of London is enough to show him what to do. Hence the tranquillity that is coming upon Ireland so suddenly through the agency of the Popish hierarchy. His Holiness knows that revolutionary agitation is a game that

two can play at; and that in that game he would infallibly be the loser. So precarious is the tenure by which the existing order of things in Europe, and especially in the Roman Catholic nations, holds its existence; so precarious the tranquillity of the passing season! And it is the consideration of the precariousness of this tranquillity which makes the passing season so precious. Providence is giving us just now, an opportunity to scatter over that broad field, seeds which shall find a lodgment in the rocks and mountains, and along the watercourses, and wherever the free winds and the birds of the air may carry them—seeds which may be buried perhaps for a while deep under the sods of the valley, and may seem to be lost, but which in their appointed time shall yield a blessed harvest. Let us “sow our seed in the morning, and in the evening withhold not our hand, for we know not whether shall prosper either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.” But we know that “in due season we shall reap if we faint not.”

There is an old man in Europe, whose days are now “dwindled to the shortest span,”—an old man on whose continuance in life depends the continuance of the peace of Europe, and the stability of its thrones. It is that old man who by the surge of a revolution fifteen years ago, was tossed as it were, after a life of storm and change, into the throne of the Bourbons. The death of Louis Philippe, whenever it may occur, is likely to be the signal for the outbreking of the suppressed fires of revolution. He is the conservator of the peace of Europe. He holds in check by his vast system of power and of policy, by force combined with patronage, and with the adroitest management of men and tendencies, the impetuous impulses of the French nation. Who shall hold them in check when his heavy sceptre, of iron, and of gold, shall have descended to the hand of an infant? Who shall keep the peace of Europe then? Who shall hold back the wheels of revolution then? Who shall hold Hungary to the throne of Austria then? Who shall hold Lombardy to Austria then? Then Italy so long divided into fragments, so long kept asunder by the petty acts of Papal diplomacy, in opposition to the strong yearning with which the parts are ever tending to be one

again, will be shaken with new conflict, while those sundered members, instinct with the life of ages, struggle wildly to achieve a better destiny. Then it will be too late for such a work as our's, a work of love and light, a work for times of quietness. Now, while the elements still slumber, is the time to hold up those ideas of justice and true freedom, to spread abroad those elements of life and salvation, which, now diffused, may be effectual in moulding, renewing and transforming the social institutions that must otherwise be speedily dissolved.

Rev. Mr. KIRK, of Boston, succeeded Dr. BACON in a speech in effect as follows:

We have just been properly reminded that no institution can live, unless it is demanded by the circumstances of men, and by the sense of their necessities. Our Alliance complies with these conditions. It is not a creator, but a creation; not a cause, but an effect. It is the creature of a rapidly strengthening public sentiment; the channel for a thousand swelling streams of holy feeling, of contempt for arrogance, hatred of bigotry, and love of liberty. It was not organized to originate opposition to the Papacy. But, an opposition to the Papacy, that has existed for a long time, and increased in strength with its duration, now seeks to express itself in something more practical and efficient than it finds in any existing organization. The Christian Alliance is an expression of the vitality of Protestantism in its three grand features—its love of spiritual liberty—its unity of spirit and purpose—its Christ-like charity.

1. *Protestantism is the love of Spiritual Liberty.* At first indeed, it was only the offspring of that sentiment; for Luther's protestations were at first against dogmas only. But the protestation did not organize itself in the form of the new Church, until he had discovered that despotism is the essential spirit of the Papacy. It is also true, that neither he nor our Puritan fathers had so far unlearned the lessons of despotism received in their childhood and manhood, as to embrace in the universality of its application, the doctrine of the right of private judgment. And yet, with these qualifications, Protestantism is essentially the love

of religious liberty. It abhors despotism over the conscience, both for its parentage and its progeny ; originating, as every grade of this tyranny does, in the baseness of a scepticism, which admits not the existence of a spiritual religion, and working hypocrisy in the tyrant and in his victim. It is utterly uncongenial with every system and feeling which seeks unity by violating independence. It is utterly opposed to the very word Toleration, in religion. What ! it indignantly exclaims, *tolerate* me in my duty, my thinking, my worship ? Who made you the master of my conscience, of my understanding, and my religious sensibilities ? Who has placed you and me in such a relation, that I must be indebted to your clemency, if my head remains upon my shoulders when I worship God as I understand God to require ? It is opposed to that arrogance or pride which prompts a man, in virtue of externals, of rites, of ecclesiastical organization or polity, or of anything, but Christian character, to claim a superior place in the divine favor. It abhors spiritual despotism in the baseness of its attempt to destroy the very being of piety, by riveting upon the spirit the hollowness and mockery of formalism. It originated in the love of truth, grew into the love of liberty, and now is its pledged defender and supporter. Do any inquire what is spiritual liberty ? It is like the air ; a good whose presence is not realized, and whose worth is not known by the possession, but by the deprivation. Spiritual liberty is not a positive and essential good by itself, for it may exist with great evils ; and yet no real good can exist without it. And it is on account of this indissoluble connection with all the higher forms of good that we prize it. Spiritual liberty is essential to sincerity, to faith, love, obedience, humility, charity, in a word, to all that is true and noble in Christian character. When under civil pains and penalties, or the more terrible fulminations of ghostly tyrants, a man embraces a creed, performs a ceremony, sings a psalm, utters a prayer, he is not a man, he is a machine ; he does not believe, nor love, nor praise, nor pray, just so far as he feels the power of human dictation and human menace. He has sold himself to the Juggernaut of Hypocrisy, and consented to lie down under its filthy wheels, and be crushed for the glory of the

hideous idol. Protestantism loathes all this. It has learned the dignity, and glory, and sweetness of believing on evidence, of believing God in spite of men, of daring to follow the truth against the frowns of the great and the hissings of the multitude. Spiritual liberty is the uninterrupted opportunity of expressing religious opinions through the press, or by conversation and preaching, and of worshipping God according to personal convictions. The right to such expression of opinion, and to such worshipping, is a sacred territory, which no man can invade with impunity, on any pretence. If the individual is doing wrong, his responsibility is to God, and not to a civil government, nor to a spiritual government, unless he has freely professed accordance with it in matters of opinion and worship. But to assume the power of thinking for other men, of believing and of prescribing a way of worshipping God on penalty of fines, civil disabilities, imprisonments, *autos-da-fé* and excommunications, all this Protestants abhor. And the Christian Alliance designs to express that abhorrence in appropriate actions. This is our title—The Christian Alliance for the promotion of religious liberty. Let our banner thus inscribed wave from the mosque of Omar, the Capitol of Washington, the Cathedral of Milan, the Tower of Notre-Dame, and the Dome of St. Peter's. Let the weary and fainting nations look up and see its majestic folds, and read the pledge of our holy brotherhood—to labor until death, for the world's emancipation. This is one ground for a distinctive organization.

2. *Protestantism has a unity of Spirit and Purpose.* It is among the misrepresentations of Papal teaching, that Protestantism is division and confusion, and that Romanism is unity and order. This is not the place to discuss that point, and show the wide range of facts that contradict it. Suffice it now to assert, and appeal to men who know, on either side, for the truth of the assertion, that within the Roman ranks there are as many differences of opinion and practice, as many jealousies and hatreds as Rome has ever charged upon her adversary. But we repeat, Protestantism is *one*. It includes two classes; that gives it the unity of Christianity, which, like its founder, always reckons

wheat and tares in the field of the Church, good and bad fish in its net, wise and foolish virgins in its professed attendants on the Lord of the feast. Protestantism has just so much uniformity as honestly expresses the unity of independent men, who in the independent exercise of their individual powers, have come to think, and speak, and feel, and worship alike. Any other uniformity is the result of a degrading military drill, which destroys individuality, to secure the quiet working of a great human machine, called the Church. Protestantism abhors the grave-yard harmony, the Procrustes uniformity of the Roman Church. There is one thing at least, in which all Protestants are united (and that unity this Alliance is organized to express), that is, the honesty and earnestness of our attachment to the right of private judgment, in matters between God and the soul. And he who differs from us there is no Protestant.

3. *Protestantism is founded in Charity.* I make here no arrogant nor extravagant pretensions. All Protestants have not been, and all are not charitable. But I speak of the two systems as contrasted in their essential spirit. You hear, indeed, of Rome's tender compassion for men's souls; and I rejoice to believe that many a Romanist has as much of that sentiment as any of us who oppose him. Our protest, however, against the compassion of the sect as such, is on the ground of its expending the energy of its charity in reasonings, persuasions, denunciations, social excommunications, imprisonings, banishments, burnings, dragoonings, Bartholomew-day murderings, with many of much more recent date, to bring its victims to profess what they do not believe, and to promise what they cannot conscientiously perform, and to strengthen the influences of a hierarchy which they detest. To deny that the Papacy has exercised such charity toward heretics and recreant Romanists, is to expunge the records of history. To deny that the spirit of the sect is unchanged, and as bad now as it ever was, is to admit, that there was a time when the keys were taken out of Peter's hands, so that some things which he bound on earth were unbound in Heaven; is to admit, that there was a dark and long period in which the Spirit

was not with the Church; and that period so surrounding and including the Council of Trent, as to make her present foundation unstable. We believe that the human heart is just so depraved, that when its possessor gets into the position of a Roman prelate, whose salvation is not made sure by faith nor by works, but by water, and wafer, and Latin charm-words; whose temptation to aggrandize his official power is so great; who has such a vast pecuniary investment, such great political interests in the system, he will enslave, oppress and maltreat his fellow men, with less compunction, less restraint, less modesty, and shame, and fear, than a man in any other situation in the world. The poor slave-trader is working hard for himself, against his conscience, his country, the world. But the Papal slaver has (in his own estimation) God, the holy angels, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs looking down with delight upon every pious wrench he gives the tortured limb or the agonized mind of his heretical victim. I wish it were slander to say so. Yes, before God, I wish it were a false imputation upon the unchanged, immutable, immaculate Church of Rome, to say, she persecutes. But the man must be a fool, who pretends that her policy is guided and inspired by the charity of the New Testament. A Protestant may have an uncharitable heart; but it is because he is a man, not because he is a Protestant. His system inculcates uncompromisingly these principles—convince and persuade by truth, and if these fail, cease every effort but prayer. Rome says, you ought to save the heretic's soul at the expense of his body; and logically too does she say it, on her premises. Protestantism, in its true spirit, is the love of man, and the love of truth. It seeks to bring them into holy wedlock, by spreading the charms of the one before the other's eyes. It has no violence; it can have none, from its nature. It has no selfish end; I mean from the necessity of the case. The Protestant may belong to a sect, and indulge too much desire to swell the numbers of his sect. But I repeat, he gets none of that from Protestantism. But the Romanist is taught that men must be made to attach themselves to the one true Church, willingly if willingly, but willingly or unwillingly for the

greater glory of God (as the Jesuits say), the union must be formed. God's glory, the Church's honor, the man's soul, all require that the man be married to the Church. Charmed or disgusted, knowing or ignorant, sincere or hypocritical, he must marry the Church. Oh, how has this great world of civilized men stood by so long, and seen the abominations of this process, without forming a Holy Alliance to expose the adulterous character of such wedlock! But the time has come. The Christian Alliance is the world's voice, and the world's hand, moved by compassion for man, upraised, outstretched to prevent the increase of this pollution.

But where will the Christian Alliance begin to work? In Italy—the land of Dante, and of Petrarch. In Italy; because Rome is its capital; and Rome is the seat and centre of spiritual despotism. She substitutes fictions for truth; a human will for God's, in the religious direction of men. Her power is compulsion, not persuasion. Her alliance is with military power; and with the sophistry, and intrigue, and bribery of diplomacy. In 1815, at a meeting of the German Confederacy, Metternich said to the assembled princes of Europe: "Let us set ourselves not only against the popular movement of the age, but moreover labor to restore the quietness of the feudal ages." When this sentence fell on the ears of Europe, they laughed; but a thoughtful observer might have mingled some tears with his smiles. The restoration of the feudal system is the dream of an old man with a withered heart, who seeks to turn the world into the quiet chamber, where neither children's rattles nor grown men's working-tools may disturb his repose. It is a ridiculous thought; and yet that ridiculous phrase actually describes the policy of Europe: and while it fails, and must fail, to attain its end, the experiment will cost much to poor humanity, and keep back the day of light and freedom for unhappy Europe. The present Pope is personally a poor old man, more to be pitied than feared; but the Roman hierarchy, in which the despotic principle is embodied, which is the choicest instrument of European despotism,

is now crushing the energies and wearing out the hearts of our brethren in Italy. Go where you will in that unhappy country, you will see the marks of spiritual despotism as we have described them. But this is, after all, only one side of the case. The traveller sees only the surface. Some of us have been permitted to look a little deeper, and to see what only two parties fully understand. I mean the Italians and their oppressors. The inward reality is, that while the Reformation is crushed in Italy, its spirit remains unsubdued. I mean not here its evangelizing doctrine, nor its spiritual feeling, but the inborn love of liberty.

There is among us but a limited appreciation of the actual spirit of Italy. Just refer to the fact that the literature and the history of Italy are anti-papal. The cry of Dante still rings in the ears of his countrymen, when appealing to God against the court of Rome.

The history of the country is a record of the villanies of the Popes—of the rise and fall of Italian freedom. The whole policy of the Popes has been to court the princes when the Papacy was overthrown, or its temporal domain abridged. Pepin was invited in to prevent the Lombards from making a nation of Italy. In the thirteenth century, the Roman court, fearing that Manfred would make one nation and kingdom of Italy, invited Charles of Anjou to invade it. Charles was successful, and his success was rewarded with the dominion of Naples by the Pope, for subduing his country to himself. The flourishing Italian republics were overthrown by the intrigues of Rome. What is more revolting to an Italian heart than the destruction of the Florentine Republics by Clement VII.? Their country was rising again under the French administration; but ever since the Pope was restored to his dominion, in the middle section, everything has been declining. I am not, in all this, alluding to his temporal power as a prince, but to his temporal power brought to invade the department of thought, conscience, and will, in matters of religion. And if any American still believes that Italy loves the Pope, let me try to undeceive him by an assertion which may start him on the track of inquiry—*it is not so*. The traveller who looks only

at the works of art in Italy, and passes rapidly through the country, may fail to see the indications of discontent. But there are eyes that see them—there are some in the Vatican that know them. The Italian spirit is sick of the spiritual despotism of the Roman court. Who is this Pope that strides upon our shores, and is already laying the foundations of his empire, perhaps of his Inquisition, on our mountains and in our valleys? Who is that man, that accosts us with great swelling words? Is he the representative of the Italian mind and heart—and is he the revered bishop of souls, whose pious example and labor have endeared him to the holiest of his countrymen? Has he left behind him thousands of happy subjects, millions praying for his success? No, none of all this. Foreign bayonets, and the policy of the British Cabinet, force his tyranny on his discouraged countrymen. No—his plans, his policy, are execrated by the best and most enlightened men of Italy. Foreign gold, and gold wrung from an oppressed people, is carrying on his war among us. The Italian mind is struggling for freedom. What means of emancipation does the Christian Alliance propose to employ?

1. *The union of the free hearts of the human race*; simply for the moral effect of union.

This is another answer to the question, why no existing organization accomplishes our purpose. They are either confined to evangelical sects, or they propose an object which cannot enlist the sympathies of enlightened nations, not possessing our evangelical views. But liberty, liberty of conscience, is a watchword to ring throughout the earth, and thrill the heart of every papal country. The name of Christian Alliance has already, I believe, sounded more powerfully in Italy, than the names of all our missionary and anti-papal organizations. Why? Its banner bears a word most dear to their hearts. It proclaims—*we are with you in heart; struggle on, wait on, pray on; we are with you.*

If you do not believe me, read the Bull. What sent its warning here among the free-hearted American churches? How came the old gentleman to expose his terror so early? Many here think the Alliance is a feeble affair. Well, surely, if any-

body ought to know, it is His Holiness. The priests of Rome do not conceal their consternation.

2. *Supervision of the Pope, and correspondence with him.* There is, probably, not a man in whom we have a greater interest; and yet how little we have done to cultivate his acquaintance!

3. *Direct instruction of the people in their rights and their duties.* To deal with the masses, you cannot rely on the powers of the earth. They are against you. But the masses are with you. I say *masses*; for there are no *people*, in the political sense, in Europe. The Pope sends out his edicts, and agents to deal with our people. We shall send ours to deal with the intelligent few and uneducated many, over whom he rules. We have as much interest in them as we have in the Chinese or the Polynesians. We will go to Italy, and say to the multitude of its miserable population: Establish schools, chapels, newspaper-presses; circulate books, Bibles, &c.; place these volumes of Merle D'Aubigné, in a cheap form, at the doors of Italy. That work now commands the admiration of the most sensible men in Italy. The first volume alone would overthrow all respect to the usurped authority of the Church, in the majority of minds. We can send the Italian Bible with the imprimatur of their own bishops, which will stop the mouths of the Jesuits.

Of the feasibility of our plans we will say nothing at present. They are in their incipient stage; and time alone can test them. Not one of them is new, however, or untried. There are but two experimental points in the whole enterprise; will Protestants *act* together—will the Italians receive our sympathy and aid? We have no doubts about the affirmative answer to both these questions. Let those who have doubts wait, and candidly observe our movements.

APPENDIX.

ADDRESS.

For nearly twenty-five centuries, the destinies of a great portion of the world have been involved with those of the Italian peninsula. The empire which arose out of the victories of the Roman Republic, which attained its height of grandeur under the Roman emperors, which decayed with the decay of ancient civilization, and which fell under the successive assaults of barbarian hordes, emerging from northern Europe and from central Asia, did not perish when it fell. Unlike those ephemeral empires which suddenly appear in history, and pass away as suddenly, the Roman empire, with its centuries of growth and centuries of slow decay, had taken too deep a hold upon the destinies of the world, to be swept away by any external overthrow. The spirit of departed empire lingered around "the eternal city," and soon embodied itself in other forms. Though the eagles of conquest and of dominion had taken their flight from the Capitol and from the Palatine mount, Rome was still the world's metropolis; and from her seven hills there went forth over the nations of barbarian conquerors, an influence that tempered their ferocity, checked the power of secular tyrants, maintained the ascendancy of one learned language, and constrained all Europe, divided into so many nations and languages, to acknowledge a common authority and to look to a common centre. The bishops of Rome appropriated to themselves the vacant sovereignty

of the world, and the pretended successors of St. Peter became the actual successors of Cæsar. Under the operation of the dominion which Rome thus established, placing the foot of her pontiffs on the necks of kings, and compelling them to execute with their secular power the decrees of her spiritual despotism, christianity—the christianity of the church as distinguished from that of the Bible, was robbed of that free spirit which it had in the beginning—the spirit which, recognising, in matters of faith and worship, the doctrine of every man's individual and direct responsibility to God, asserts the corresponding right of individual judgment and action, and proclaims to all who would stand between God and the conscience, "whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken to you more than to God, judge ye." Rome reigned over the domain of conscience, and princes were the executioners of her decrees. And when at length the nations of the earth revolted against Rome, and the empire of her pontiffs was rent by the protestant reformation, even then that inalienable birth-right of the soul, freedom of faith and worship, was but faintly asserted in protestant countries, and governments claimed that command over the intercourse between the soul and its Maker, which had been exercised by Rome. It was only in a new world, over which the colossal shadow of Roman dominion never fell, that the great idea of the complete exclusion of government from all jurisdiction over religious faith could be realized. This idea, completely developed in all its applications, and every where established as a supreme and irreversible law of society, is destined to give to christianity the opportunity of reasserting its primitive simplicity and purity, and the primitive freedom and loftiness of its spirit.

At the present day, the destinies of a large part of the human race are dependent on the condition of Italy. The empire which the Roman pontiff holds in the world of

thought and faith, is in the most intimate alliance, offensive and defensive, with systems of secular misgovernment. An intellectual and moral revolution in Italy, emancipating the minds of the masses there, and establishing the great principle of religious freedom in the conviction of the people, would speedily be felt wherever the See of Rome has influence. Let it become self-evident to the people of Italy, as it is to the people of America, that the State has nothing to do with the intercourse between man and God; and that every man has a right to determine for himself, under his responsibility to God, what teacher he will accept to enlighten and to guide his soul, and with whom he will associate himself for worship and religious communion; and ere long that great idea ascendant in the common mind, the idea of religious freedom, will work out for itself, by one process or another, under a merciful Providence, its practical developement. The prevalence of the doctrine of religious liberty among the Italians would change all things in Italy. Even within "the patrimony of St. Peter," it would kindle the light of true and spiritual worship amid the monuments and mummeries of superstition; it would arrest the progress of desolation, by removing the most effectual of the causes that have paralyzed the nerves of industry, and have spread blighting and decay over the face of nature itself; and by awakening in the common mind the consciousness of a spiritual emancipation, it would impart a new impulse to every department of thought and enterprise. The bishop of Rome, instead of being dishonored as the head of the worst governed state in christendom, would become simply the chief dignitary of a great religious communion. That change would be felt throughout the world.

The common mind of Italy, it is believed, is gradually tending towards such a change. The abortive attempts at

political revolution, which have occurred within the past twenty-five years, and which have been put down immediately by Austrian bayonets, have taught Italian patriotism one valuable lesson. The patriotic minds of that glorious land, whether in exile or on their native soil, are understood to have abandoned the hope of liberating their country by insurrection and the sword. They see that there can be no hope of a new Italy, otherwise than by an intellectual and moral revolution that shall make the people new. They see that nothing desirable can be accomplished without the diffusion of new, quickening and elevating ideas among the masses of their countrymen. They see that Italy will have all necessary freedom whenever the common people, the gay unthinking peasantry of her villages, and the mechanics and shopkeepers of her towns, begin to become inquiring, thoughtful men ; men accustomed to believe and act, not implicitly according to the dictation of others, but intelligently according to their own convictions. Many of them having been made acquainted, by years of exile, with what it is that constitutes the happiness of nations truly free, have become convinced that the great charter of such happiness is the Bible, and that the ideas which are to work out the true emancipation of their country, can never be awakened in the masses, but in connection with the teachings of that book. With such views, movements are already organized by Italians themselves to diffuse among their countrymen such knowledge as will tend to that intellectual and moral renovation without which all political changes will be of little value.

The Christian Alliance, for the promotion of religious freedom, has originated in the attention which gentlemen of various Christian denominations, in the city of New-York and elsewhere, have recently given to the present condition of Italy, and the relations between that country and the

cause of religious freedom throughout the world. A door is open for the access of truth to the minds of the Italian people. Notwithstanding the most rigid censorship over the press and the importation of books; notwithstanding every regulation which the genius of despotism can devise to shut out knowledge and to suppress inquiry; notwithstanding the terrors of Austrian artillery and the inconveniences of a police swarming in every quarter; it is ascertained that to some extent papers, tracts, books, the Bible itself, can be introduced into Italy, and can be placed in the hands of those who will hardly fail to read and to profit by the reading. At the same time an ample field of effort is presented among the Italians out of Italy, between whom and their countrymen at home there is, and notwithstanding every possible regulation there must continue to be a constant intercourse. Even the slightest acquaintance with Italians in foreign countries shows that they are liberally disposed and ready to receive new ideas. From the Ionian islands, from France, from Great Britain, and from other countries, Italians are continually returning to Italy; and if, in the lands in which they sojourn for a season, their minds receive a quickening impulse, and they learn that "the Bible without a clasp" is the palladium of true liberty, they cannot but communicate to their countrymen around them something of the same impulse.

With reference to the field thus opened among the Italians, both in and out of Italy, the "Philo-Italian Society" was founded a few months ago, in the city of New-York. The correspondence of that Society, and the consultations which it has held with friends of the cause in other parts of the country, have resulted in some modification and enlargement of the plan; and thus has arisen the organization which now presents itself to the christian public. Our great object is the promotion of religious freedom; but still,

as before, we propose to labor for that object, particularly and chiefly, by the diffusion of useful and religious knowledge among the Italians. It is upon Italy, with all its ancient and enduring influence upon the doctrines of the world, it is upon the metropolis of that great spiritual despotism which has for ages overshadowed the nations, that our eyes are fixed. Our prayer shall be, and our hope, that the great Babylon may fall; and that the banner of primitive christian truth and freedom may float over the Vatican itself.

In pursuing this object, we do not expect to intrude upon the appropriate operations of any existing benevolent institution. On the contrary, our labor will be chiefly that of inquirers and pioneers, seeking to bring into action, in the particular field of our efforts, the various systems of benevolent enterprise which we find already organized. If we find it in our power to arrange in Italy, or among the Italians elsewhere, an agency for the distribution of Bibles, we shall call on the Bible Society to do that work. If we find openings for the distributions of such pamphlets and books in the Italian language as can be consistently published by the American Tract Society, or by any of the publishing boards of the several religious communities with which we are connected, we shall not fail to devolve that work upon those to whom it properly belongs. If we find opportunity for the employment of a living ministry, in the way of preaching the Gospel in the Italian language, there are institutions already in existence, on whose aid we shall rely, to send forth and sustain that living ministry. But at the same time there is much to be done, in our field and for our object, which cannot be brought within the scope of any existing institution other than our own. Inquiries are to be prosecuted; facts are to be collected, collated and given to the world; agencies and correspondences are to be established; tracts and books are to be prepared

and issued in Italian, and perhaps in other languages, setting forth in a clear light, for popular apprehension, the great argument for religious freedom. In these particular efforts we must be aided by contributions to our treasury. And in reference to such efforts as these, we ask for the co-operation of all whose judgment shall approve our undertaking as important, and as likely to be conducted in a right spirit and with a suitable measure of sound discretion.

With questions properly political our association has nothing to do. We do not undertake to persuade the people of Italy that their governments need reformation; that a republic is happier than a monarchy; or that an elective magistracy is better than a hereditary aristocracy. Whatever may be our judgment as individuals, whatever our sympathies as American citizens, we are not political propagandists. We only assert the sacred right, the religious duty of every man to read the Scriptures for himself, and to worship God, not in blind submission to priests or potentates, but in the exercise of his own faculties, and according to his own convictions.

To us, it is an interesting feature of this enterprise that it has brought together, in free and friendly consultation, and in hearty co-operation, christians of various ecclesiastical connections. We hope that our CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE will be another rallying point for that large and catholic feeling which dwells ever in hearts that love the Savior. And while we invite our fellow-disciples, in all parts of the country, to unite with us, either singly or in auxiliary organizations, and thus to aid us with their contributions and their personal influence; we would yet more earnestly solicit their continual prayers for us, and for "them that are at Rome also," making request, if by any means our enterprise may be prospered by the will of God, "that we may

impart to them some spiritual gift ;” and that thus the Gospel in which we rejoice, and which, as disciples of Christ and members of his universal church, we hold forth to the world, “may have fruit among them also, even as among other Gentiles.”

LEONARD BACON,	} <i>Corresponding Secretaries.</i>
EDWIN HOLT,	
GEORGE B. CHEEVER.	



The contributions of our friends are solicited in aid of the following specific efforts, which will be immediately attempted.

1. It is proposed to send to London, Paris, Lyons, Switzerland, Marseilles, Corsica, Malta, Corfu, Constantinople, Smyrna, Alexandria, Algiers, Barcelona, and other parts of Europe resorted to by large bodies of Italians, a judicious agent to establish a correspondence, and depositories for the sale of Bibles and other books, and to effect other arrangements for the religious and intellectual improvement of that interesting people.

2. It is also highly desirable that similar arrangements may be effected in Buenos Ayres, Montevideo, Rio Janeiro, the Gulf of Mexico, &c. where several thousands of Italians are to be found, destitute of all moral and religious information.

3. Funds are needed immediately for the preparation and publication of tracts and books in the Italian language ; the History of the Reformation* by Merle D'Aubigné should be translated into Italian without delay. The materials in McCrie's Memorials of the Reformation in Italy may be put into an Italian dress and published with great effect. The men are in this country, native Italians, men of taste, scholarship, patriotism, and enlightened piety, who may be employed on these and similar works.

4. The means are also wanting to bring before the American public the true state and condition of the various Popish countries, and the character of Popery as a system. A series of publications exhibiting the full developement of the Christianity of Tradition, will be the true "tracts for the times."

* This history is now ready for publication.

THE
ENCYCLICAL LETTER
OF OUR LORD
POPE GREGORY XVI.

TO ALL
PATRIARCHS, PRIMATES, ARCHBISHOPS, AND BISHOPS,

ISSUED MAY 8, 1844.

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY
SIR CULLING EARDLEY SMITH, BART.

VENERABLE BRETHREN,

GREETING AND THE APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION.

AMONGST the principal machinations by which, in this our age, the Non-Catholics of various names endeavor to ensnare the adherents of the Catholic truth, and to turn away their minds from the holiness of the Faith, a prominent position is held by the Bible Societies. These societies, first instituted in England, and since extended far and wide, we now behold in one united phalanx, conspiring for this object, to translate the books of the Divine Scriptures into all the vulgar tongues,—to issue immense numbers of copies,—to disseminate them indiscriminately among Christians and Infidels,—and to entice every individual to peruse them without any guide. Consequently, as Jerome* lamented in his time, they make common to the garrulous old woman, the doting old man, the wordy sophist, and to all men of every condition, provided only they can read, the art of understanding the Scriptures without an instructor; nay, which is absurdest of all, and almost unheard of, they do not even exclude unbelieving nations from such community of intelligence.

But, Venerable Brethren, you are not ignorant of the tendency of the proceedings of these societies. For you know full well the exhortation of Peter, the chief of the Apostles, recorded in the sacred writings themselves, who, after

* Epist. ad Paulinum, sec. 7, quæ est Epist. liii. tom. i. Op. S. Hieron. edit., Vallarsii.

praising the Epistles of Paul, says that there are in them some things difficult to be understood, which they who are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction ; and immediately adds, You therefore, my brethren, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard, lest, deceived by the error of the foolish, you fall from your own steadfastness.* Hence it is clear to you that even from the first age of the Christian name, this art has been peculiar to heretics, that repudiating the traditionary word of God, and rejecting the authority of the Catholic Church, they either interpolate the Scriptures *by hand*, or pervert them in the explanation of their meaning.† Nor, lastly, are ye ignorant how great diligence and wisdom are needed in order to transfer faithfully into another language the words of the Lord : so that nothing is more likely to happen than that in the versions of them multiplied by the Bible Societies, the most grievous errors may be introduced by the ignorance or fraud of so many interpreters ; errors which the very multitude and variety of the translations long conceal to the ruin of many. To those Societies, however, it matters little or nothing into what errors the persons who read the Bibles translated into the vulgar tongues, may fall, provided they be gradually accustomed to claim for themselves a free judgment of the sense of the Scriptures, to condemn the Divine traditions as taught by the Fathers and preserved in the Catholic Church, and even to repudiate the Church's direction.

To this end, these members of Bible societies cease not to calumniate the Church and this holy see of Peter, as if it had for many ages been endeavoring to keep the believing people from the knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures ; whilst there exist many and most perspicuous proofs of the earnest desire which, even in recent times, Popes, and other Catholic dignitaries under their guidance have felt, that nations of Catholics might be more carefully instructed in the written and traditionary words of God. To which head belong, in the first place, the decrees of the Council of Trent, in which not only is it enjoined on bishops, to provide for the more frequent announcement through each diocese of the *sacred Scriptures and the divine law*,‡ but, enlarging the enactment of the Lateran Council,§ it is moreover provided, that in each church, whether cathedral or collegiate, of cities and considerable towns, there should be a theological prebend, which should be conferred solely on persons capable of expounding and interpreting the sacred Scrip-

* 2 Perit iii. 16, 17.

† Tertullianus, lib. *De Præscriptionibus* adversus hæreticos, cap. 37, 38.

‡ Sess. XXXIV. cap. 4. De Ref.

§ Concil. Lateran. anni 1215, sub Innocentio III. cap. xi., quod in corpus juris relatum est, cap. 4, *De Magistris*.

ture.* Respecting the subsequent constitution of the theological prebend, on the plan of the above Tridentine enactment, and respecting the lectures to be delivered by the theological canon to the clergy, and even to the people, steps were taken in several provincial synods,† particularly in the Roman Council of the year 1725,‡ to which Benedict XIII., our predecessor of happy memory, had convened not only the sacred dignitaries of the Roman province, but also several of the arch-bishops, bishops and other local ordinaries, under the immediate authority of his holy see.§ The same Pontiff made several provisions with the same design, in the apostolical letters which he issued specifically for Italy, and the adjacent islands.|| To you, too, Venerable Brethren, who at stated periods have been accustomed to report to the apostolic see, upon the condition of sacred affairs in your respective dioceses, it is manifest, from the replies again and again¶ by our “Congregation of Council” to your predecessors, or to yourselves, how this holy see is wont to congratulate bishops, if they have theological prebendaries ably discharging their duty in the delivery of public lectures on the sacred writings, and never ceases to excite and assist their pastoral anxieties, if anywhere the matter has not succeeded to their wishes.

With regard, however, to Bibles translated into the vulgar tongues, it was the case even many centuries since, that in various places the holy dignitaries were obliged at times to exercise increased vigilance, when they discovered that versions of this sort were either read in secret conventicles, or were actively distributed by heretics. To this refer the admonitions and cautions issued by Innocent III., our predecessor of glorious memory, concerning assemblies of laics and women secretly held in the diocese of Metz,** under a pretence of piety, for reading the Scriptures; and also the peculiar prohibitions of Bibles in the vulgar tongue, which we find to have been issued in

* Trid. Sess. V. cap. 1. De Ref.

† In Concil. Mediol. I. an. 1565, par. i. tit. 5, *De Præb. Theol.*; Mediol. V. an. 1579, par. iii. tit. 5, *quæ ad Beneficior. collat. attin.*; Aquensi, an. 1585, *De Canonicis*, et aliis plurib.

‡ Tit. i. cap. 6, segg.

§ In Litteris indictionis Concilii, 24 Decembris, 1724.

|| Const. *Pastoralis Officii*, XIV. Kalend. Junii, an. 1725.

¶ Ex Constit. Sixti V. *Romanus Pontifex*, XIII. Kal. Jan. an. 1585, et Const. Bened. XIV. *quod Sancta Sardicensis Synodus*, IX. Kal. Decemb. 1740, tom. i. Bullar. ejusdem Pontif., et ex Instructione, quæ extat in Append. ad Dict. tom. i.

** In tribus Litteris datis ad Metenses, atque ad illorum Episcopum et capitulum, necnon ad Abbates Cisterciensem, Morimundensem, et de Crista, quæ sunt Epist. 141, 142, lib. ii., et Epist. 235, lib. iii. in Edit. Balutii,

France soon after,* and in Spain previous to the sixteenth century.† But greater precaution was needed afterwards, when the Lutheran and Calvinist Anti-catholics, venturing to assail with an almost incredible variety of errors the unchangeable doctrine of the Faith, left no means untried to deceive the minds of the faithful by perverted explanations of the Scriptures, and by new translations of them into vulgar tongues, edited by their adherents. The lately-discovered art of printing assisted them in multiplying and speedily spreading copies. Accordingly we read in the rules drawn up by the Fathers chosen by the Council of Trent, approved by Pius IV., our predecessor of happy memory,‡ and prefixed to the Index of Prohibited Books, a provision of general application that Bibles published in the vulgar tongue, should be allowed to no persons but those to whom the reading of them was judged likely to be productive of an increase of faith and piety.§ To this rule, afterwards rendered more stringent, owing to the pertinacious frauds of the heretics, a declaration was at last attached by the authority of Benedict XIV., that the perusal of such versions may be considered permitted, as have been published with the approbation of the apostolic see, or with annotations taken from the holy Fathers of the Church or from learned and Catholic men.||

Meanwhile there were not wanting new sectaries of the Jansenist school, who, in a style borrowed from the Lutherans and Calvinists, scrupled not to reprehend these wise provisions of the Church and the apostolic see, as if the reading of the Scriptures were useful and necessary to every class of the faithful, at every time and in every place, and therefore could not be forbidden to any one by any authority whatever. This audacity of the Jansenists, however, we find severely reprehended in the solemn judgments which, with the applause of the whole Catholic world, were delivered against their doctrines by two Popes of happy memory, viz. Clement XI., in the bull *Unigenitus*, of the year 1713;¶ and Pius VI., in the bull *Auctorem Fidei*, of the year 1794.**

Thus, therefore, before Bible Societies were formed, by means of the above decrees of the Church the faithful had been fortified against the stratagem of the heretics, which lies concealed under the specious plan of spreading the

* In Concil. Tolosano, an. 1229, can. 14.

† Ex testimonio Cardinalis Pacecco, in Concilio Tridentino (apud Pallavicinum, storia del Concil. di Trento, lib. vi., cap. 12).

‡ In Const. *Dominici Gregis*, 24 Martii, 1564.

§ In Regulis Indicis III. et IV.

|| In Addition. ad dict. Regul. IV. ex Decreto Congregationis Indicis, 17 Junii, 1757.

¶ In Proscriptione Propositionum Quesnelli, a num. 79 ad 85.

** In Damnatione Propositionum Pseudo-Synodi Pistoriensis, num. 67.

Holy Scriptures for general use. Pius VII., however, our predecessor of glorious memory, in whose time those societies arose, and who found that they were making great progress, failed not to oppose their endeavors, partly through his apostolic nuncios, partly by epistles and decrees issued by different congregations of cardinals of the holy Roman Church,* and partly by his two papal briefs which he addressed to the Archbishops of Genes† and Mohilow.‡ Afterwards Leo XII., our predecessor of happy memory, assailed those same designs of the Bible Societies in his Encyclical Letter addressed to all the dignitaries of the Catholic world, on the 5th May, 1824; and the same thing was again done by our immediate predecessor of equally happy memory, Pius VIII., in his Encyclical Letter issued the 24th May, 1829. We, too, who with far inferior merit have succeeded to his place, have not omitted to exercise our apostolical solicitude upon the same object, and among other things have taken steps to recall to the memory of the faithful the rule formerly enacted concerning translations of the Scripture into the vulgar tongues.§

We have, however, great cause to congratulate you, Venerable Brethren, that, at the impulse of your own piety and wisdom, and confirmed by the above letters of our predecessors, you have never neglected, when necessary, to admonish the Catholic flock to beware of the snares laid for them by the Bible Societies. From these efforts of the bishops, in conjunction with the solicitude of this supreme see of Peter, it has resulted, under the Lord's blessing, that certain incautious Catholics, who were imprudently encouraging Bible Societies, seeing through the fraud, immediately withdrew from them; and the remainder of the faithful have continued nearly untouched by the contagion which threatened them from that quarter.

Meanwhile the biblical sectaries were possessed with the confident hope of acquiring great credit, by inducing in any manner unbelievers to make a profession of the Christian name by means of reading the Holy Scriptures published in their own tongue, innumerable copies of which they caused to be distributed through their countries, and even to be forced on the unwilling, by means of missionaries, or agents in their employ. But these men thus endeavoring to propagate the Christian name contrary to the rules instituted by Christ himself, found themselves almost always disappointed, with the

* *Imprimis per Epistolam Congregationis Propagandæ Fidei ad Vicarios Apostolicos Persiæ, Armeniæ, aliarumque Orientis Regionum datam 3 Augusti, 1816, et per Decretum de omnibus hujusmodi versionibus editum a Cong. Indicis, 23 Junii, 1817.*

† Die 1 Junii, 1816.

‡ Die 4 Septembris, 1816.

§ In Monito adjecto ad Decretum Congregationis Indicis, 7 Januarii, 1836:

exception that they were able sometimes to create new impediments to Catholic priests, who, proceeding to these nations with a commission from this holy see, spared no exertions to beget new sons to the church, by the preaching of the Word of God, and the administration of the sacraments, prepared even to shed their blood amidst the most exquisite torments for the salvation of the heathen, and as a testimony to the faith.

Amidst these sectaries, thus frustrated in their hopes, and reviewing with sorrowful hearts the immense amount of money already spent in publishing and fruitlessly distributing their Bibles, some have lately appeared, who, proceeding upon a somewhat new plan, have directed their machinations towards making their principal assault on the minds of the Italians, and of the citizens of our very city. In fact, from intelligence and documents lately received, we have ascertained that several persons of different sects met last year at New York in America, and on the 12th of June formed a new society, entitled, "The Christian Alliance," to be increased by new members from every nation, or by auxiliary societies, whose common design shall be to introduce religious liberty, or rather an insane desire of indifference in religion, among the Romans and other Italians. For they acknowledge that for several centuries, the institutions of the Roman and Italian race have had such great and general influence, that there has been no great movement in the world, which has not begun from this holy city; a fact which they trace not to the establishment here, by the Divine disposal, of the supreme see of Peter, but to certain remnants of the ancient dominion of the Romans, lingering in that power which, as they say, our predecessors have usurped. Accordingly, being resolved to confer on all the nations liberty of conscience, or rather of error, from whence, as from its proper source, political liberty will also flow, with an increase of public prosperity, in their sense of the word, they feel they can do nothing unless they make some progress among the Italians and citizens of Rome; intending afterwards to make great use among other nations of their authority and assistance. This object they feel sure of attaining, from the circumstance that so many Italians reside in various places throughout the world, and afterwards return in considerable numbers to their own country; many of whom, being influenced already of their own accord with the love of change, or being of dissolute habits, or being afflicted with poverty, may without much trouble be tempted to give their name to the society, or at least to sell their services to it. Their whole aim, then, is directed to procuring the assistance of such persons in every direction, transmitting hither by their means mutilated Italian Bibles, and secretly depositing them in the hands of the faithful; distributing also at the same time other

mischievous books and tracts, intended to alienate the mind of the readers from their allegiance to the Church and this holy see, composed by the help of those same Italians, or translated by them from other authors into the language of the country. Among these they principally name the History of the Reformation, by Merle d'Aubigné, and the Memoirs of the Reformation in Italy, by John Cric [John M'Crie],* The probable character of this whole class of books may be inferred from this circumstance, that it is a law of the Society, with regard to select Committees for the choice of books, that there shall never be two individuals of the same religious sect upon any one of them.†

As soon as this news reached us, we could not but be deeply pained at the consideration of the danger with which we learned that the sectaries menaced the security of our holy religion, not merely in places remote from this city, but even at the very centre of Catholic unity. For though there is not the slightest cause for fear that the see of Peter should ever fail, upon which the Lord Jesus Christ has built the impregnable foundation of his church, we must not for that reason cease from maintaining its authority; nay, our very office of the supreme apostolate reminds us of the severe account which the Divine Chief Shepherd will require of us for any tares sown by the enemy while we slept, which may grow up in the Master's field; and for the blood of any sheep entrusted to us which by our fault may have perished.

Having, therefore, taken into our council several cardinals of the holy Roman Church, and having gravely and maturely weighed the whole matter, with their concurrence we have decided to issue this epistle to you, Venerable Brethren, in which, as respects all the aforesaid Bible Societies, already reprobated by our predecessors, we again with apostolical authority condemn them; and by the same authority of our supreme apostolate, we reprobate by name and condemn the aforesaid new society of the "Christian Alliance,"

* The following are the works referred to: "History of the Great Reformation of the Sixteenth Century in Germany, Switzerland, &c. By J. H. Merle d'Aubigné." "Histoire de la Réformation. Par J. H. Merle d'Aubigné."

"History of the Progress and Suppression of the Reformation in Italy in the Sixteenth Century; including a Sketch of the History of the Reformation in the Grisons. By Thomas M'Crie, D.D."

† The following is the rule referred to:—"The Board of Councillors shall annually elect, by ballot, a committee of publication, consisting of not less than three, nor more than five members, no two of whom shall belong to the same religious denomination; and no books or tracts shall be published or circulated by the Society to which any member of that Committee shall object."—*Translator.*

constituted last year at New York, and other associations of the same sort, if any have joined it, or shall hereafter join it. Hence be it known, that all such persons will be guilty of a great crime before God and the church, who shall presume to give their name, or lend their help, or in any way to favor any of the said societies. Moreover, we confirm and by apostolical authority renew the aforesaid directions already issued concerning the publication, distribution, reading, and retention of books of the Holy Scripture translated into the vulgar tongues; while with respect to other works, of whatever author, we wish to remind all persons that the general rules and the decrees of our predecessors, prefixed to the Index of Prohibited Books, are to be abided by; and consequently, not only are those books to be avoided which are by name included in the same index, but those also to which the aforesaid general directions refer.

Called as you are, Venerable Brethren, to participate in our solicitude, we urgently bid you in the Lord to announce and explain, as place and time permit, to the people entrusted to your pastoral care this our apostolic judgment and commands; and to endeavor to turn away the faithful sheep from the above society of the "Christian Alliance" and its auxiliaries, as also from all other Bible Societies, and from all communication with them. At the same time it will also be your duty to seize out of the hands of the faithful, not only Bibles translated into the vulgar tongue, published contrary to the above directions of the Roman pontiffs, but also proscribed or injurious books of every sort, and thus to provide that the faithful may be taught by your monitions and authority, "what sort of pasture they should consider salutary to them, and what noxious and deadly." Meanwhile, Venerable Brethren, apply yourselves daily more and more to the preaching of the word of God, as well personally as by means of those who have cure of souls in each diocese, and other ecclesiastical men suited to that function; and especially pay more vigilant attention to those whose office it is to hold public lectures on the Sacred Scripture, that they may diligently discharge their duty to the comprehension of their readers; and may never under any pretext venture to interpret or explain the Divine writings contrary to the tradition of the Fathers, or differently from the sense of the Catholic Church. Lastly, as it pertains to a good shepherd not only to protect and nourish the sheep which adhere to him, but also to seek and bring back to the fold those which have strayed away, it will therefore be both your duty and ours, to apply all the energy of our pastoral endeavors, that if any persons have suffered themselves to be seduced by such sectaries and propagators of noxious books, they may by God's grace be led to acknowledge the gravity of their sin, and strive to expiate it by the remedies of a salutary penitence. Neither must we exclude

from the same sacerdotal solicitude the seducers of others, and even the chief teachers of impiety; whose iniquity though it be greater, yet must we not abstain from the more earnestly seeking their salvation by all practicable ways and means.

Moreover, Venerable Brethren, against the plots and designs of the members of the "Christian Alliance," we require a peculiar and most lively vigilance from those of your order who govern churches situated in Italy, or in other places where Italians frequently resort; but especially on the confines of Italy, or wherever emporiums and ports exist from whence there is frequent communication with Italy. For as the sectaries themselves propose to carry their plans into effect in those places, those bishops are especially bound to co-operate with us, so as by active and constant exertions, with the Divine help, to defeat their machinations.

Such endeavors on your and our own part we doubt not will be aided by the help of the civil powers, and especially by that of the most potent princes of Italy; as well on account of their distinguished zeal for preserving the Catholic religion, as because it cannot have escaped their wisdom, that it is highly to the interest of the common weal, that the aforesaid designs of the sectaries should fail. For it is evident, and proved by the continued experience of past ages, that there is no readier way to draw nations from their fidelity and obedience to their princes, than that indifference in the matter of religion, which the sectaries propagate under the name of religious liberty. Nor is this concealed by the new society of the "Christian Alliance;" who, though they profess themselves averse to exciting civil contentions, yet confess that from the right of interpreting the Scriptures, claimed by them for every person of the lowest class, and from the universal liberty of conscience, as they term it, which they would thus spread among the Italian race, the political liberty of Italy will also spontaneously follow.

First, however, and chiefest, let us together raise our hands to God, Venerable Brethren, and commend to him with all the humility of fervent prayer of which we are capable, our own cause and that of the whole flock of his own church; invoking also the most pious "deprecation" of Peter the chief of the apostles, and of the other saints, and especially of the most Blessed Virgin Mary, to whom it is granted to exterminate all heresies throughout the entire world.

Lastly, as a pledge of our most ardent love, to all of you, Venerable Brethren, to the clergy entrusted to you, and to the faithful laity, with unrestrained and hearty affection we lovingly grant the apostolic benediction.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, the 8th May, 1844, in the fourteenth year of our pontificate.

GREGORY PP. XVI.

NOTE.

The preceding encyclical letter was published on the 25th May, 1844, in the *Diario di Roma* (the official gazette of the papal government), in the Latin and Italian languages. The translation was made from a copy purchased at the Roman Gazette Office, in June of the same year. Sir Culling Eardley Smith republished the original document in Latin, and the authorized version in Italian, in the same pamphlet, page by page with his own accurate and elegant version in English. We have not thought it necessary, however, to reprint them here. The reader may be assured that he has a genuine bull of a living Pope.

The Translator, in a truly Catholic epistle, dedicated the fruit of his labors "to every individual who is conscious of being a member of the Church of Christ." He concludes that epistle in these words: "Who can say that a joint reply to this papal manifesto, from the European and American Churches, might not, under the Divine blessing, incidentally lead to that manifestation of the oneness of the true Church, which apparently is to be the means of exposing the unsoundness of the false church, and of proving to the world the Divine mission of the Lord Jesus Christ?"

At the anniversary meeting of the Massachusetts Branch of the Christian Alliance, held in Boston, May 29th, 1845, the following Resolutions were adopted:

Whereas a document has appeared, entitled "The Encyclical Letter of our Lord, Pope Gregory XVI., to all Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, and Bishops, issued May 8, 1844," in which the Roman Pontiff makes various grave charges against Protestant Christians, denouncing with great severity their motives, purposes and efforts, and enjoining upon all the faithful to oppose and counteract their endeavors, therefore

Resolved, That it is the solemn duty of Protestant Christians, as they would show due allegiance to Jesus Christ, as the Supreme Head of the Church, and suitably honor the truth which they hold in common, and declare to the world their essential unity in the spirit and faith of the Gospel, to unite in a joint reply to this papal manifesto.

Resolved, That, as some passages in this remarkable document clearly indicate that the formation of "The Christian Alliance," with the undisguised announcement of its principles and designs, was the immediate occasion that drew from His Holiness this development of his solicitude and indignation, it is incumbent on this Association to adopt incipient measures with reference to the preparation of such a reply as the case obviously demands.

Resolved, That a Committee be now appointed to correspond with such clergymen and others, as they may judge expedient, in England, Scotland, France, Switzerland and Germany, inviting the appointment of European Committees who shall represent their respective branches of the Protestant Brotherhood, and co-operate with the American Committee in preparing and publishing, in various languages, such a reply to said Encyclical Letter as they can jointly issue.

Resolved, That the American Committee consist of the following gentlemen, who shall have power to fill any vacancy which may occur in their number :

- Rev. LYMAN BEECHER, D.D., of the Presbyterian Church.
- Rev. LEONARD BACON, D.D., of the Congregational Church.
- Rev. STEPHEN H. TYNG, D.D., of the Episcopal Church.
- Rev. WILLIAM R. WILLIAMS, D.D., of the Baptist Church.
- Rev. GEORGE PECK, D.D., of the Methodist Episcopal Church.
- Rev. S. S. SCHMUCKER, D.D., of the Lutheran Church.
- Rev. THOMAS DE WITT, D.D., of the Reformed Dutch Church.
- Rev. JOHN W. NEVIN, D.D., of the German Reformed Church.

Subsequently, at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Massachusetts Branch (on the 2d of June), it was resolved, "That the Resolutions passed at the anniversary meeting of this Society, on the 29th of May last, in reference to the preparation of a reply to the Encyclical Letter of the Pope, be referred to the action of the parent Society in New York."

The Executive Committee of the parent Society have accordingly requested a member of the Committee appointed by the Massachusetts Branch to prepare for them the proposed reply. Such a document, though subscribed by many, must of course be mainly the production of one mind, and the preparation of it must be a work of time. The Committee hope to be able to submit it to the Society at the next annual meeting. Meanwhile we invite the friends of the Redeemer everywhere to co-operate with us in the noble work of extending religious freedom throughout the world. We respectfully request pastors to present the cause to their people, and remit to us their contributions, thus saving the expense of agencies. We especially recommend the formation of auxiliary Societies. The moral influence of such organizations, both upon those who compose them and upon Romanists, is an important feature of our plans. They show the real strength and unity of Protestants.

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